

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: ARBATOV ON U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS AND CSCE

REF: MOSCOW 12127

1. SUMMARY. ARBATOV'S LENGTHY ARTICLE IN IZVESTIYA SEPTEMBER 3

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IS ESSENTIALLY A REFINEMENT OF PRESENTATIONS ON DETENTE AND CSCE

THAT HE HAS MADE TO VISITING US GROUPS. THE ARTICLE SHARPLY CRITICIZES WESTERN EMPHASIS UPON CSCE'S BASKET THREE BUT LEAVES OPEN THE MORE IMPORTANT QUESTION OF THE DEGREE OF ACTUAL SOVIET COMPLIANCE. IT UNDERSCORES THE NEED FOR TIMELY GUIDANCE ON THE COMPLIANCE ISSUE.

2. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECOGNIZE ARBATOV'S POLEMIC AGAINST "ENEMIES OF DETENTE" (WE ASSUME FULL TEXT IS AVAILABLE VIA FBIS) AS LARGELY REFLECTING THE LINE ARBATOV HAS TAKEN IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH VISITING CONGRESSMEN AND OTHER US DELEGATIONS. THE ARTICLE APPARENTLY WAS PROMPTED BY SOVIET CONCERN THAT A GROWING FOCUS IN THE WEST UPON SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH CSCE'S BASKET THREE REQUIRED AN AUTHORITATIVE, HARD-HITTING RESPONSE.

3. THE ESSENCE OF ARBATOV'S MESSAGE TO HIS FOREIGN AUDIENCE IS THAT THE SIGNING OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A MAJOR TURNING-POINT IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS; THOSE IN THE WEST WHO ARE TRYING TO USE THE FINAL ACT AS A WEAPON FOR INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE AT BEST MISGUIDED, AT WORST UNRECONSTRUCTED ANTI-COMMUNISTS; THE USSR WILL FULLY MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS PURSUANT TO THE FINAL ACT, "ON THE BASIS OF RECIPROCITY AND IN FULL CONFORMITY WITH THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF THE DOCUMENT," THE UNITED STATES, WITH ITS MANY HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS, HAS NO "MORAL RIGHT" TO JUDGE OTHERS; THE MAIN TASK IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS IS TO MAKE DETENTE IRREVERSIBLE, AND THE USSR IS OPTIMISTIC THIS WILL ULTIMATELY BE ACCOMPLISHED.

4. THE MESSAGE FOR ARBATOV'S READERSHIP WITHIN THE USSR BASICALLY IS THAT NOISE FROM THE WEST ABOUT SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH BASKET THREE STEMS FROM ENEMIES OF DETENTE; THERE IS LITTLE THAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOVIET UNION, ALTHOUGH AS DETENTE AND MUTUAL TRUST DEVELOP, THE USSR WILL EXPAND COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN THESE FIELDS.

5. IT WOULD OF COURSE BE PREMATURE TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS ARTICLE ABOUT ACTUAL SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH BASKET THREE. ARBATOV'S AGGRESSIVE ATTACK COULD BE A COVER FOR EVENTUAL FORTHCOMING SOVIET MOVES IN THIS AREA, JUST AS IT COULD BE USED AS A RATIONALE FOR LITTLE OR NO MOVEMENT. ARBATOV'S TOUGH APPROACH DOES SUGGEST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL VIGOROUSLY REBUFF PUBLIC EFFORTS FROM THE WEST TO EMPHASIZE SOVIET BASKET THREE OBLIGATIONS, PROBABLY ALONG THE LINES OF ARBATOV'S ARGUMENT. THE ARTICLE THUS INDICATES THAT THE ISSUE OF CSCE COMPLIANCE MAY ASSUME CONSIDERABLE PROPORTIONS IN COMING MONTHS, AND UNDERSCORES THE NEED FOR TIMELY GUIDANCE FOR USE HERE AND IN EASTERN EUROPE -- AND PERHAPS ALSO IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY USG SPOKESMEN -- ON THE COMPLIANCE ISSUE.

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